

REMARKS

The Office Action dated August 18, 2008, has been received and carefully reviewed. The preceding amendments and the following remarks form a full and complete response thereto. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended. No new matter is added. Claims 1-14 are pending in this application and are submitted for consideration.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 3 have been amended to recite “while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction.” This limitation finds support in the specification in paras., inter alia, [0017], [0018], [0024], and [0026]. Claim 3 has been additionally amended to recite “said misalignment being a movement of the bank note in a direction deviating from the transport direction of the transport system.” Support for this amendment can be found, inter alia, in para. [0007].

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 3-7 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,140,166 to Gerlier. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and submit that claims 1, 3-7 and 13 recite subject matter not disclosed by Gerlier.

Claim 1 defines a method for aligning bank notes in a transport system. The method includes a step of detecting the alignment of a bank note transported separately in the transport system. The detected alignment of the single bank note is checked for the presence of a misalignment. The single bank note is aligned in a desired alignment by a movement of the single bank note in a direction deviating from the transport direction of the transport system using the detected misalignment. The alignment of the single bank note is detected during the aligning, the aligning occurring while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction. The aligning is terminated as soon as the single bank note has the desired alignment.

Claim 3, upon which claims 4-7 and 13 depend, defines an apparatus for aligning bank notes in a transport system, with a device for detecting the alignment of a bank note transported

separately in the transport system; a device for checking the detected alignment of the single bank note as to the presence of a misalignment, where a misalignment is a movement of the bank note in a direction deviating from the transport direction of the transport system, and means for aligning the single bank note in a desired alignment. The means are controlled by the device for checking the detected alignment using the detected misalignment while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction. The device for detecting the alignment detects the alignment of the single bank note in the area of the means for aligning, and the device for checking the detected alignment stops the means for aligning, as soon as the single bank note has the desired alignment.

As a result of the claimed configurations, a method and system for aligning a sheet or bank note in a transport system is provided that has advantages including that the current alignment is checked during the aligning of the sheet or bank note and aligning is terminated as soon as the desired alignment is reached. Further, the interruption of the transporting of the bank note is not required—that is, alignment occurs while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction. For example, paras. [0017] and [0018], describe that an alignment of the bank note that is transported in parallel to its edges can be achieved by means setting the bank note in a motion which deviates from the transport direction of the transport system. Paragraphs [0025]-[0026] also describe a continuing transport alignment with respect to transporting a bank note from the mechanical system through the air baffle plate, moving the bank note along transport direction T, while altering the air flow such that the bank note is moved in a direction deviating from the transport direction T to achieve the desired alignment.

In contrast, Gerlier describes the alignment of a sheet, wherein an interruption of the transport of the sheet is necessary for the alignment (see, e.g., col. 9, lines 34-68). Particularly, it is stated in lines 44 and 45 that the transport means must release the sheet for alignment. Gerlier fails to disclose such an arrangement or method whereby detecting misalignment while aligning the bank note occurs while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction. Rather, Gerlier states that the transport means must release the sheet for alignment. Thus, Gerlier fails to disclose each and every element of claims 1, 3-7 and 13. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2, 10, 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,140,166 to Gerlier in view of U.S. Patent 5,755,437 to Ek. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and submit that claims 2, 10, 11 and 14 recite subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the combination of the cited prior art.

Claims 2, 10, 11 and 14 depend from claims 1 or 3. Thus, the comments made above with respect to Gerlier apply equally to claims 2, 10, 11 and 14.

Ek is provided allegedly to disclose features of the dependent claims. Applicants submit that Ek fails to disclose that which is asserted in the Office Action. Moreover, Ek fails to cure the deficiencies of Gerlier. Ek fails to disclose an arrangement or method whereby detecting misalignment while aligning the bank note occurs while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction. Rather, Ek discloses an arrangement in which a step or device for detecting misalignment of a bank note is discrete and distinct from a device or step of aligning a bank note. See, e.g., FIG. 1 (showing sensors 12 as discrete from straightening means 11). Thus, the combination of Gerlier and Ek fails to include each and every element of claims 2, 10, 11 and 14, much less suggest or render them obvious. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 8, 9, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,140,166 to Gerlier in view of U.S. Patent 3,918,706 to Craft. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection because the combination of prior art fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of claims 8, 9, and 12.

Claims 8, 9, and 12 depend from claim 3. Thus, the comments made above with respect to Gerlier apply equally to claims 8, 9, and 12. Craft is directed to a pneumatic sheet transport and alignment mechanism that utilizes an edge guide. Craft fails to cure the deficiencies of Gerlier. Craft fails to disclose an arrangement or method whereby detecting misalignment while aligning the bank note occurs while the bank note to be aligned is being transported in the transport direction. In fact, Craft altogether fails to disclose detecting a misalignment. Thus, the combination of Gerlier and Craft fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of claims 8, 9, and 12. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, all objections and rejections have been sufficiently addressed. Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and requests that claims 1-14 be allowed and this application passed to issue.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-2135.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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